

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## ***SOUTHERN AFRICA: FOOD INSECURITY***

21 November 2005

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.*

### **In Brief**

Appeal No. 05EA23; Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 18 October to 21 November 2006; Appeal coverage: 11.8%; [Click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website.](#)

#### **Appeal history:**

- Launched on 18 October 2005 for CHF 39,360,753 (USD 30,193,299 OR EUR 25,301,687) to assist up to for 1.5 million beneficiaries for 9 months.
- Operations Update no. 1 dated 6 Nov. 2005 [http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?05/05EA02301.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?05/05EA02301.pdf)

Outstanding needs: CHF 34,733,534 (USD 27,124,978 or EUR 22,473,979).

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: N/A

**Operational Summary:** The food insecurity operation has started at a level lower than desired due to the relatively limited donor response to the emergency appeal. The Federation has established taskforces in both Geneva and Harare in order to ensure that support is delivered to the most vulnerable of the targeted groups. Due to the limited funding at this moment, priority has been given to activities in Malawi where severe food insecurity has already claimed lives. The other six national societies are still finalizing their action plans in anticipation of the availability of funding in the near future. Procurement of food aid and agricultural starter packs for Malawi has commenced.

With the food insecurity situation in the seven countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) remaining critical, the International Federation calls for immediate and generous donor support to allow the implementation of planned food and livelihood-reinforcing programmes for the nine months.

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*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

## Operational developments

The Southern Africa food insecurity emergency appeal was launched on 18 October 2005 to assist 1.5 million affected people in seven countries in the region. This nine month operation aims to support the affected population with targeted food distribution and building their capacities to enhance livelihood through community-based activities from the Red Cross national societies. The operation also reflects the Federation's commitment to move from relief assistance to longer-term sustainable programming. Donor response to the emergency appeal has been slow, and this is limiting the scope of the operation, despite the need to scale up the assistance to the affected people.

During the month of October and in early November 2005, the price of maize in southern Africa continued to rise well above the average before the lean season, which traditionally begins in December. Despite some slight optimism from the Southern Africa Climatic Outlook Forum (SARCOF) for a normal to above-normal rainfall season in 2005-06, the availability of inputs is of great concern, particularly in the countries most affected by the current food crisis (Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe) where there is a serious short supply of maize seed, fertilizers and fuel. Approximately 12 million people are in need of emergency food assistance until the 2005-06 harvest, with needs continuing to rise.

**Lesotho:** Poor prospects for the secondary winter crop have exacerbated the already tight food supply situation in the country. With the approach of the lean season, the problem of access to food for thousands of food insecure households is worsening. Due to funding short-falls, the 272,000 vulnerable individuals are not able to get any immediate food assistance.

**Malawi:** On 14 October 2005, the government declared a state of disaster for all 28 districts due to the food insecurity situation. There are indications that the crisis may already be surpassing worst-case scenarios in some areas, particularly in the southern parts of the country. An estimated 46,000 children are severely malnourished and a further 92,000 moderately malnourished children could become severely malnourished if they do not receive urgent assistance. The government has responded by establishing the Feed the Nation Fund and declaring the situation a national disaster. So far the UN, EU, Britain and the World Bank have pledged support of over USD100 million. The problem has reached a critical point with unconfirmed reports indicating that over 37 people have died because of the starvation-related causes.

**Mozambique:** Results of a survey conducted by Mozambique's Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN), in 128 districts, indicated that maize prices have risen by over 100%. The results also indicate that 801,000 people in 62 districts will now need food assistance from November until March 2006. In addition to food assistance, the vulnerable households also require assistance in procurement of agricultural inputs, particularly in the seed-insecure provinces of Tete, Gaza and Inhambane. Government seed fairs are targeting only 50,000 small-scale farmers, and both private and government institutions are unable to meet the demand.

**Namibia:** The situation described in the appeal remains unchanged.

**Swaziland:** The severe drought in most parts of the country has not been broken even with the recent rains that fell in early November. Most dams' water levels have drastically fallen to the point where irrigation projects have been put on hold and urban centres are preparing for water rationing. Consequently, the government declared the water crisis a national disaster on 8 November 2005, and has since appealed for assistance from local and international donors to cushion the effects of the worsening situation. The worst affected areas are Lubombo, Shiselweni and some parts of the Northern Hhohho. The food insecurity situation is getting worse, with nearly a third of Swazis currently dependent on food donations from international relief organizations. A parliamentary report on the food shortage, tabled by the kingdom's deputy prime minister in early November, noted that 27,000 metric tonnes of food aid is needed to help feed 265,000 vulnerable people between now and April 2006. The recipients of food assistance include drought victims, indigent school children, people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and the elderly.

**Zambia:** A Vulnerability Assessment Capacity (VAC) team recently reassessed the food insecurity situation and its preliminary results increased the total number of people in need of food assistance from 1.2 million to at least 1.7 million. Maize prices have risen by up to 60 per cent within a year, pushing this basic cereal beyond the reach

of the poorest people. The situation is deteriorating rapidly in the drought-prone southern part of the country, and there's increasing concern of malnutrition, lack of safe drinking water and other food-related problems. Consequently, on 27 October 2005, the Zambia government launched an appeal to international donors to help scale up humanitarian relief programmes with urgent food assistance. Although the southern part of the country is the most affected, the crisis has spread across to the western, central, eastern provinces and some parts of Lusaka province.

**Zimbabwe:** The level of food insecurity continues to worsen for both urban and rural populations, due to the reduced availability of staple cereals and the ever-rising cost of living. Even though tremendous efforts are being made by the government to import food into the country to cover the production gap, the in-country grain distribution problems arising from shortages of fuel and trucks are restricting the amount of grain available on the market- particularly in the remote parts of the country. At current importation rates, the government will import about 80 percent of the targeted 1.2 million metric tonnes of maize. Although climate experts predict that the country's cereal producing regions have greater chances of good rainfall in the 2005/06 cropping season, the farmers may not be able to take advantage of the potentially good rainfall season because of serious shortages of critical inputs. Fuel and foreign currency shortages, compounded by an inflation rate of 411% in October 2005, are significantly reducing the capacity of sustenance and small farmers to access seeds, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs at the inception of the rain season. Consequently, the poor preparations for the 2005/06 agricultural season lend little confidence to Zimbabwe's prospects for coming out of the current food security crisis in 2006.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action- objectives, progress and impact**

**Overall goal: To assist some 1,483,900 vulnerable beneficiaries in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe with food security, water and sanitation projects and to reinforce coping mechanisms (promoting livelihoods).**

### **Food Assistance**

**Objective: To meet the immediate food needs of vulnerable individuals in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe until the next harvest in 2006.**

Of the seven countries facing the food crisis, the Federation decided to focus its emergency response foremost on Malawi which is critically food deficient. To kick-start the operation in Malawi, the Federation Secretariat released CHF 1,000,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The two-and-half month plan of action and budget to utilise the available funds was finalised and is now operational. The Malawi Red Cross Society has already initiated the recruitment process for the local staff. Furthermore, a Malawi task force has been formed, comprising of the national society's leadership and the resident bilateral delegates of the Danish Red Cross, the Spanish Red Cross and the Netherlands Red Cross. The task force is already taking the lead in coordinating the operation.

Given that the Finnish Red Cross has an existing food procurement pipeline in the region, it is taking the lead in the procurement for the **Malawi** operation- with support from the Federation regional delegation's logistics department. An order of food inputs for Malawi- representing an in-kind donation from the Finnish Red Cross- has been placed and the delivery is expected to take place in early December 2005. The order includes 500 MT of maize, 100 MT of pulses, 100 MT of CSB and 40,000 litres of cooking oil. Procurement for additional food items (555 MT of maize, 111 MT of pulses, 111 MT of CSB, 44,400 litres of cooking oil and 10,000 agricultural starter packs) is being finalized and is supported from the DREF allocation. The logistics team developed the terms of reference and checklist for the modalities of making procurements through the Finnish Red Cross.

### **Reinforcing self-reliance and coping mechanisms (livelihoods)**

**Objective: To re-enforce or rebuild self-reliance and to restore their positive coping mechanisms through food-for-work/food-for-assets (income generating opportunities), cash transfers, targeted agricultural support, and the provision of vegetable garden drip kits.**

Engagements with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) regarding emergency funding decisions to support complementary food distributions and provision of agricultural starter packs in three southern districts of **Malawi** are in progress (proposal details were specified in [Operational Update no. 1](#)). ECHO officials, accompanied by the Federation Secretariat, the Danish Red Cross representatives and the Malawi Red Cross Society staff conducted a field visit between 14 and 17 November 2005 to assess the situation. The ECHO proposal has now been finalised.

In **Zambia** a proposal for funding support from the Department for International Development (DfID) is being developed, with technical assistance from British Red Cross. The funding will be for the provision of agricultural starter packs in the targeted food insecure districts.

## **Water and Sanitation**

**Objective: Ensure access to safe and adequate drinking water, borehole rehabilitation, sanitation, small-scale irrigation, latrine construction, and hygiene education by vulnerable individuals.**

The planned activities are:

- Water and sanitation activities that benefit home-based care (HBC) clients, their households and communities- such as rehabilitation and drilling of new boreholes;
- Hygiene education and promotion.

A lack of funding has limited the planned implementation of activities in this sector.

## **Reinforcing capacities in assessing livelihoods, and food security monitoring and reporting**

**Objective: To ensure that national society staff is well versed in livelihood and food security interventions**

There is still a need to put more resources towards capacity building for staff and volunteers in the operating national societies. Steps have been undertaken to recruit the required staff at national society and regional delegation level and relevant training has been planned within the first few months of the operation.

In terms of human resources necessary to support existing structures in delivering the humanitarian assistance as described in the appeal, all positions for Geneva Secretariat, Harare regional delegation and at country levels have been advertised both locally and internationally. Since the appeal is still under-funded, it was proposed during the last regional task force meeting that the limited funds be used to expand and start operations in **Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia** and **Zimbabwe**. In addition, there is urgent need to finalise the recruitment of the appeal coordinator; relief coordinators for Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe; regional food security finance officer, human resources assistant and monitoring and evaluation officer. The other positions will be filled as more funding become available. The logistics coordinator delegate for Malawi has started his briefing process, while the roaming logistics delegate assumed office on 1 November 2005. As a stop gap measure, the regional water and sanitation delegate, regional food security officer and regional procurement officer will support the operation until the vacant positions are filled. The regional finance and administration department is working at the budget for the required office equipment such as computers, mobile phones, office space, residencies and transport among others.

A Southern Africa Region Food Security meeting was held in Geneva on 7 November 2005 to deliberate on the severity of the food insecurity in the southern Africa region and how to address the chronic situation. The main issues of concern articulated at the meeting were:

- The challenge of resourcing for this operation - concerns about the state of the appeal and its lack of funding;
- The need for a media strategy to address the current inadequate media coverage and information dissemination in order to raise the profile of the emergency operation;
- The need for sufficient support to national societies to avoid them becoming overstretched, thereby adversely affecting other ongoing or core programmes;
- The need to develop operational alliance amongst the Movement partners;
- The need to develop a long term regional food security strategy.

The concept of operational alliances will be tested for the first time in Southern Africa. It entails the national societies, Federation Secretariat, partner national societies (PNS) and possible external partner(s) to collectively consolidate their competencies and resources so as to achieve the goals of the operation in an effective coordinated and cost efficient manner. The Federation aims to capitalize on operational alliances with PNS in the various countries, with the latter possibly taking on the lead role in some of the national societies.

### **Impact**

Through the monitoring efforts, it is evident that the food security intervention (given the current economic decline in Zimbabwe and food shortage in the seven countries) is essential. The provision of food will maintain/improve the nutritional status of the vulnerable groups being targeted, thereby preventing them from becoming malnourished. Food assistance will also increase mobility and self-sufficiency amongst HBC clients, allowing them to comply with tuberculosis and anti-retroviral therapy medication prescriptions, thereby increasing the rates at they recover and are weaned from the programme. All this will decrease mortality.

### **Constraints**

Lack of an adequate and timely donor response to the operation is delaying the procurement of inputs and the start of the operations in all countries with the exception of Malawi where minimum activity has already started. If funding shortfalls persist, the delivery of much needed assistance in the form of agricultural starter packs might not be in time for the agricultural season, as the planting season will end by January 2006.

### **Federation coordination**

Country action plans detailing assistance to be delivered are being finalized and will be formalized as attachments to country relief agreements to be signed by the Federation Secretariat and national societies end of November 2005.

Task forces are key forums to facilitate and support implementation of regional food security/livelihoods strategy. A regional food security task force to lead the implementation of the operation and ensure liaison between the substantive regional programming and the emergency relief operation was established at the regional delegation and is fully operational. Food security country task forces have been established in **Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland**, comprising of national society's staff and PNS and Federation representatives. The tasks forces aim to ensure proper coordination and synergies between traditional long-term and emergency programmes. The country tasks forces also liaise with the regional delegation in discussing and endorsing any programmatic and operational issues that may arise. Task forces are also being established in **Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe**.

### **National Society Capacity Building**

National societies in the region have started to recruit additional technical staff necessary to complement and deliver the assistance as planned. The expansion of human resources and logistics capacity to scale up assistance delivered through home-based care (HBC), orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS (OVC) programming is an urgent requirement to ensure smooth implementation of projects.

A training programme in food security, followed by a workshop specifically addressing issues pertaining to the current operation, is planned for the second week of February 2006.

### **Communications – Advocacy and Public Information**

As part of providing support to the food insecurity appeal, the regional information and promotion of Humanitarian Values office issued a regional press release to raise the interest of the media on the magnitude of the food crisis. In response, a number of inquiries have been made on the situation. Reuter's news crew took a tour of Swaziland (through the facilitation of the regional office) to cover food insecurity issues. The Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society took the crew to the field to cover the most affected areas.

The head of regional of delegation was interviewed by Channel Africa with focus on Malawi. So far three news stories have been published on **Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe**. The regional programme coordinator was interviewed by Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation television station to highlight on the magnitude of the food security situation.

Following the launch of the emergency appeal, the regional delegation has developed a media strategy in collaboration with Federation Geneva Secretariat media service. The strategy aims to provide guidelines on how to provide communication and advocacy support to the food security operation (before, during and after the operation) and to highlight the magnitude of the crisis to the outside world- given that there are other competing disasters. The strategy was circulated to all national societies for operationalization.

To consolidate the media strategy, the regional delegation will conduct a training workshop for information officers in the region between 7 and 10 December 2005. The workshop will aim to strengthen the information dissemination capacity of national societies. Partner national societies have been invited to send over their information officers (for the workshop) and media houses to go into the field together with the national societies' information officers. In 2005, the regional delegation information department has published three success stories for Zimbabwe, one each for Malawi and Zambia, while those for Lesotho and Swaziland are pending.

Click below to visit the Federation website with links to the profiles and directories of the national societies involved in this operation.

Lesotho Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=102>

Malawi Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=110>

Mozambique Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=120>

Namibia Red Cross- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=122>

The Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=163>

Zambia Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=12>

Zimbabwe Red Cross Society- refer to <http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/check.asp?countryid=13>

*[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)*

# Southern Africa - food insecurity

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 05EA023

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

21/11/2005

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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### CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				39,360,753	TOTAL COVERAGE 11.8%	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/HAPS		990,000	CAD	1,077,318	07.11.05	
FINNISH - RC		100,000	EUR	155,700	25.10.05	MALAWI
FINNISH - GOVT		14,625	EUR	22,771	25.10.05	MALAWI
JAPANESE - RC		30,000,000	JPY	332,400	02.11.05	
MONACO - RC		20,000	EUR	31,140	25.10.05	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		9,000,000	NOK	1,777,500	15.11.05	
SWEDISH - RC		5,000,000	SEK	810,000	11.11.05	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				4,206,829	CHF	10.7%

### KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
FINNISH - GOVT		270,000	EUR	420,390	25.10.05	MALAWI: 540 MT MAIZE, 150 MT CSB, 90 MT BEANS, 50'000 L. VEGETABLE OIL
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				420,390	CHF	1.1%

### ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	